

Lectotypification of *Eragrostis maderaspatana*

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इराग्रोस्टीस मदेरास्पेटना का लेक्टोटाईपिफिकेशन

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सारांश

प्रस्तुत शोध पत्र में इराग्रोस्टीस मदेरास्पेटना के लेक्टोटाईपिफिकेशन के साथ ही नामकरण इतिहास पर भी चर्चा की गई है। यहाँ इस जाति के मुख्य लक्षणों का भी विवरण दिया गया है जिससे इसे इसकी संबद्ध जातियों मुख्यतः इराग्रोस्टीस माइनर होस्ट से पृथक पहचाना जा सके।

ABSTRACT

The name *Eragrostis maderaspatana* is lectotypified in the present paper with a discussion regarding its nomenclature history. The salient features of this species are also provided mainly to distinguish this from its allied species, *Eragrostis minor* Host.

Keywords: *Eragrostis maderaspatana*, lectotypification.

INTRODUCTION

Eragrostis maderaspatana Bor is restricted in distribution to Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala and Tamil Nadu in peninsular India. This species is characterized by the presence of glands along leaf margins, culms, panicle and pedicels. Further, palea of this species is persistent and by these characters it comes somewhat closer to *E. minor* Host. But the shape of the caryopses of *E. maderaspatana* is grooved ventrally, truncate at both ends and yellowish brown in colour, whereas, in *E. minor* it is globose to narrowly oblong and reddish brown. Moreover, spikelets of *E. maderaspatana* are linear and narrower. Some collections of this species have somewhat dense cilia crowded on the surface of leaves and sheaths. However, hairs are usually sparsely arranged and are pilose in nature. Distribution of glands on leaf margins also is a variable character. Glands are sometimes very obscure but in most cases these are prominent, though not as prominent as in *E. minor*.

The nomenclatural problem of this species has been clearly explained by Bor (1960). Nees (1834) included this plant collected from India under Wight's Catalogue no. 1779 with the name *E. willdenowiana*, which remained a *nomen nudum* and hence illegitimate until it was validated by Stapf in Hook. f., Fl. British India 7: 32.1896. Nees validly published the same name in Hook. & Arn. (1835) based on a collection from China, which is a different species and this name has priority over the name of the South Indian plant *E. willdenowiana* Nees ex Stapf (1896) and as such is not available for the Indian plant. Hence, Bor (1960) had to give it a new name *E. maderaspatana* Bor.

Stapf (l.c.) who validly published *E. willdenowiana* Nees ex Stapf for the first time mentions the following collections: (i) Mysore, Rottler, Heyne; Dindygul, Wight (Herb. Wight propr. no. 1779) and (ii) Trincomale, Glenie (C.P. 3944). There is no mention of the Sri Lankan specimen included by Stapf (l.c.) and Bor (1960) in the



Fig -1: Image of designated Lectotype of *Eragrostis maderaspatana* Bor (India, s.dat., Wight s.n.: Herb. Wight propr. no. 1779 (K: K000245101).

databases (Kew herbarium catalogue, JSTOR Plant Science, etc.), on the syntypes of this species. Further, Lazarides (1994) in his recent account on the *Eragrostis* of Sri Lanka does not mention this species as occurring in that country. A careful search for this specimen in the relevant herbaria also did not yield any positive result. The presence of this species in Sri Lanka is doubtful. Following are the details of syntypes of the species listed in the databases of herbarium, Royal Botanic Garden, Kew and Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh.

- (i) India, No Date, Peninsula Ind. Orientalis, Wight s.n. (Herb. Wight propr. no.1779), K: K000245101.
- (i) India, No Date, Peninsula Ind. Orientalis, Dindygul, (Dindigul) Wight s.n. (Herb. Wight propr. no.1779), E: E00179708.
- (iii) India, Tamil Nadu, Dindigul, 30.11.1795, Rottler s.n., K: K000245102.
- (iv) India, Mysore, 08.06.1808, Rottler s.n., K: K000245103.

Out of these, the sheets under serial numbers (iii) & (iv) are credited to Wight in the Kew herbarium catalogue but these sheets clearly show that these are of Rottler's collections. The specimen under serial number (iii) indicates that this has been collected on 30.11.1795, one year before Wight was born. The other specimen was collected from Mysore during 1808 by Heyne and sent to Rottler (see Bor, 1960).

Out of the 4 sheets mentioned above, Stapf (l.c.) mentions only Wight's collection under Herb. Wight propr. no. 1779 and Rottler, Heyne collection from Mysore (and also a doubtful specimen from Sri Lanka about which nothing more is known) and these two only will qualify for the status of syntypes.

Out of these, Wight s.n. (Herb. Wight prop. No. 1779, deposited at K matches very well in all respects with the description and other details of *E. willdenowiana* Nees ex Stapf. This sheet contains two specimens for the name *E. willdenowiana*. There are three more names written on this sheet viz. *Poa gangetica* Roxb. (*Eragrostis gangetica* (Roxb.) Steud.) *Eragrostis minor* Host. and *E. poaeoides*.

Poa gangetica is an entirely different plant. In fact *E. poaeoides* is synonym of *E. minor*, a species allied to *E. maderaspatana* Bor but different from it by the characters

mentioned in the first paragraph. The truncate nature of the caryopses, one of the major characters to distinguish *E. maderaspatana* from *E. minor* is illustrated on the sheet itself. Stapf (1896) mentioned *Poa polymorpha* Koenig as synonym of *Eragrostis willdenowiana*. This is not correct as the former one is a synonym of *Eragrostis cilianensis* (All.) Vignolo-lutati.

Wight s.n. (Herb. prop. no. 1779) deposited at K is designated here as the lectotype of the species name *Eragrostis willdenowiana* Nees ex Stapf.

The nomenclature of this species is summarized as below:

Eragrostis maderaspatana Bor, Grass. Burma Ceylon India Pakistan: 509. 1960. *Eragrostis willdenowiana* Nees in Wight's Cat. n. 1779 ex Stapf in Hook.f., Fl. Brit. India 7: 322. 1896, '*willdenowiana*' non Nees ex Hook. & Arn. Bot. Beechey Voy. : 252. 1832. LECTOTYPE DESIGNATED HERE: India, s.dat., Wight s.n.: Herb. Wight propr. no. 1779 (K: K000245101). (Fig. 1)

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